

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTIA 05637 111703Z
ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 SCA-01 CU-04 SSO-00 H-02
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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5588

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 5637

FOR SCS AND CU/IVF

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC OEXC CI (ICX GRANTEES IN CHILE)
SUBJECT: W/W: REPATRIATION OF AMERICAN ICX GRANTEES IN CHILE

REF: STATE 159217, AND PREVIOUS

1. CONTENTS OF REFTEL COMMUNICATED TO ALL ICX PARTICIPANTS.
2. EMBASSY HAS JUST BEEN INFORMED BY AN IRATE LOCAL SPONSOR OF ONE OF THE STUDENTS (MENTIONED IN SANTIAGO 5271) THAT THE LOCAL ICX REPRESENTATIVE FRANCISCO GAJARDO HAS BEEN EFFECTIVELY INTIMIDATED INTO MAKING PRIVATE CREDIT ARRANGEMENTS WITH LAN CHILE FOR THE RETURN OF THE STUDENTS. ACCORDING TO THIS SOURCES, LAN CHILE WILL NOW BE ABLE TO ACCEPT RESERVATIONS FOR THEM AS OF MONDAY JULY 11. LAN CHILE WAS UNABLE TO CONFIRM ABOVE INFORMATION DURING THE WEEK-END. THE SEVEN PARTICIPANTS ARE NOW AWARE OF THIS SECOND "ARRANGEMENT" AND AT LEAST ONE HAS ADDITIONALLY RECEIVED A RETURN TICKET FROM PARENTS.
3. SEVERAL OF THE SEVEN PARTICIPANTS HAVE ADVISED CONOFF THAT THEY WOULD PREFER TO SEE GAJARDO PAY FOR THE TRIP TO MIAMI RATHER THAN HAVE THE AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE BAIL THEM OUT. UNCONFIRMED REPORTS FROM SOME STUDENTS AND LOCAL SPONSORS INDICATE THAT GAJARDO HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN A QUAGMIRE OF SHADY DEALINGS HERE RELATED TO HIS UNCLASSIFIED

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ICX REPRESENTATION FUNCTION, INCLUDING THE ALLEGED REMITTANCE OF THE SEVEN TICKETS. CONOFF HAS HELD MEETINGS WITH ALL PARTICIPANTS AT LEAST THREE TIMES A WEEK FOR LAST THREE WEEKS. THEY ARE WELL ORGANIZED, HIGHLY VOCAL, AND GLEEFULLY LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING GAJARDO GET HIS DUE.

4. CONOFF HAS POINTED OUT THE OBVIOUS ADVANTAGES OF AFS FLIGHT AR-

RANGEMENTS, (I.E. RAPID DEPARTURE, FACILITY OF ONWARD TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS, COHESIVE GROUP TRAVEL, ETC.). WE ARE AWARE THAT CU/IVP HAS RECEIVED NUMEROUS INQUIRIES FROM PARENTS AND CONGRESS (CONG. RONCALIO OF WYOMING), REGARDING THE PROMPT RETURN OF THE PARTICIPANTS. A QUESTION HAS BEEN RAISED HOWEVER, OF WHETHER OR NOT PARENTS WILL HAVE TO REIMBURSE AFS FOR SANTIAGO-MIAMI PORTION OF FLIGHTS. SEVERAL STUDENTS COMPLAINED THAT IF GAJARDO IS WILLING TO COUGH UP THE TICKETS THEN THE EMBASSY, DEPARTMENT, AND AFS WOULD BE SUBJECTING THEIR PARENTS TO NEEDLESS EXPENSE.

5. CONOFF FEELS HOWEVER THAT GIVEN THE A) ALREADY EXTENSIVE DELAYS CAUSED BY ATTEMPTS TO BRING GAJARDO TO BAY; B) THE URGENCY REQUIRED IN RETURNING AT LEAST TWO OF THE STUDENTS (MUNOZ AND SWALLOWS) TO THE U.S.; C) THE LACK OF LEAD-TIME PROVIDED THE POST TO INFORM PARTICIPANTS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE OF FLIGHT; D) THE FACT THAT AFS TICKETS MIGHT BE FORFEITED IF STUDENTS BANK ON THE STILL UNCERTAIN LAN CHILE ARRANGEMENTS; AND E) CONGRESSIONAL AND PARENTAL ANXIETY, THAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO ACCEPT AFS OFFER, AND THAT THEY SHOULD RETURN WITH ARRANGEMENTS CITED IN REFTEL.

6. THERE REMAINS THE POSSIBILITY THAT GAJARDO WILL COME THROUGH WITH TICKETS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE OF STUDENTS. STUDENTS AVERAGE 17 YEARS OF AGE AND IF PARENTS MUST LATER REIMBURSE AFS, COMPLAINTS WILL ARISE IF STUDENTS ARE ADVISED NOW TO IGNORE GAJARDO'S TICKETING ARRANGEMENTS. DEPARTMENT'S CONCURRENCE WITH CONOFF'S ACTION IN URGING ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF AFS ARRANGEMENTS IS REQUESTED BY IMMEDIATE
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CABLE. PLEASE ADVISE IF PARENTS ARE REQUIRED TO REIMBURSE AFS.
BOYATT

NOTE BY OC/T: REFTEL BELIEVED TO BE INCORRECT.

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